

An Bord Pleanála



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 TO 2015

Cork County

Planning Register Reference Number: 14/06760

An Bord Pleanála Reference Number: PL 04.245824

APPEAL by Jerome Cohalan and Geraldine Hanley of Gurraneigh, Lissarda, County Cork and by Barna Wind Action Group care of Noonan Linehan Carroll Coffey Solicitors of 54 North Main Street, Cork against the decision made on the 3rd day of November, 2015 by Cork County Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to Barna Wind Energy (BWE) Limited care of Fehily Timoney and Company of Cork House, Pouladuff Road, Cork in accordance with plans and particulars lodged with the said Council.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Construction of six wind turbines, with a maximum tip height of 131 metres and associated turbine foundations and hardstanding areas, one number permanent meteorological mast up to 90 metres in height, upgrade of existing and provision of new site tracks and associated drainage, new access junction and improvements to public road to facilitate turbine delivery, one number borrow pit, underground electrical and communications cables, permanent signage and other associated ancillary infrastructure at Lackareagh and Garranereagh, Lissarda and Barnadivane (Kneeves), Teerelton, County Cork. This application is intended to replace the development already granted permission under PL04.219620 (planning register reference number 05/5907) and subsequently extended under planning register reference number 11/6605. This application is seeking a 10 year planning permission. (As amended by the further public notice received by the planning authority on the 5th day of June, 2015).

DECISION

GRANT permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the said plans and particulars based on the reasons and considerations under and subject to the conditions set out below.

MATTERS CONSIDERED

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Having regard to –

- (a) the European and national policies to increase the proportion of energy that is generated from renewable sources including wind set out in the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC and the National Renewable Energy Action Plan which sets a target that 40% of the electricity generated in Ireland would be from renewable sources by 2020,
- (b) the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in June, 2006 and the limits set therein for noise and shadow flicker,
- (c) the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan 2014-2020, including objective ED-4 and the designation of the area as one where wind energy development is acceptable in principle,
- (d) the planning history of the site,
- (e) the character of the landscape of the area,
- (f) the distance to dwellings and other sensitive receptors from the proposed development,
- (g) the separation of the site of the proposed development from sites designated as part of the Natura 2000 network and the nature of the connections between them,

- (h) the Environmental Impact Statement and further information submitted by the applicant,
- (i) the submissions made in the course of the planning application, and
- (j) the report of the Planning Inspector,

it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be in accordance with national energy policy and with national and local planning policy on wind energy development and the protection of landscapes and scenic routes.

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

After carrying out a screening exercise in relation to the potential for cumulative impacts of the developments on nearby Natura 2000 sites and, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the nature of the receiving environment, the Appropriate Assessment screening report submitted with the application and the submissions on file in relation to ecological matters, it is considered that the proposed development when taken in conjunction with the adjoining electrical substation compound An Bord Pleanála appeal reference number PL04.244439, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Board adopted and agreed with the Inspector's assessment in respect of the screening exercise in relation to Appropriate Assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Board adopted the Inspector's report with regard to his assessment of the Environmental Impact Statement submitted in relation to the proposed development. After carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development, the Board concluded that when taken in conjunction with the information available on An Bord Pleanála appeal reference number PL04.244439, the proposed development would not have an unacceptable effect on the environment with respect to human beings, flora and fauna, soil, water, air, climate, material assets or cultural heritage, either directly or indirectly or in cumulation with other existing, permitted or proposed developments. In particular, the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptable effects on the residential amenities of houses in the vicinity due to noise or shadow flicker or otherwise, would not give rise to a significant impact on the wider landscape. It would give rise to a significant effect on the

landscape in the immediate vicinity of the site in conjunction with the existing windfarm at Garranareagh and the proposed substation at Barandivane. However, this effect would not be so negative or severe as to contravene the provisions of the development plan regarding the protection of high value landscapes and scenic routes and subject to the mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Impact Statement and the attached conditions the effects of the proposed development on the environment would be acceptable. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further information received by the planning authority on the 26th day of May, 2015 and the clarifications on the 5th day of June, the 20th day of July and the 10th day of September 2015, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. In particular, the mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Impact Statement and the further information shall be implemented in full by the developer. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The appropriate period of this permission during which the authorised development may be carried out shall be 10 years from the date of this order.

Reason: Having regard to the nature and extent of the proposed development, the planning history of the site, the Board considered that 10 years was reasonable given the nature and complexity of the development concerned.

3. The authorised windfarm shall operate for no more than 25 years from the date on which electricity is first exported from it or from the date of the expiry of the appropriate period, whichever is the sooner.

Reason: To clarify the nature of authorised development in accordance with the details submitted with the application.

4. Noise levels emanating from the authorised development following commissioning, when measured externally at noise-sensitive locations, shall not exceed the greater of 45dB(A) L90, 10 min or 5dB(A) above background levels between the hours of 0700 and 2300, or 43dB(A) L90, 10 min between 2300 and 0700 hours. All sound measurement shall be carried out in accordance with ISO Recommendation 1996:2007: Acoustics - Description and Measurement of Environmental Noise.

The noise mitigation measures described in the Environmental Impact Statement shall be implemented in full. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall agree a noise compliance monitoring programme for the operational windfarm with the planning authority. The operator shall maintain and make available for inspection by the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

5. Shadow flicker arising from the proposed development shall not exceed 30 hours per year or 30 minutes per day at existing or permitted dwellings or other sensitive receptors. The measures to mitigate the impact of shadow flicker described in the Environmental Impact Statement shall be implemented to ensure that any turbines which might cause an exceedence of this limit are stilled. Prior to the commencement of the export of electricity from the proposed windfarm, the developer shall submit certification from a suitably qualified person who was not previously engaged in the construction of the windfarm that the equipment necessary to implement those measures has been properly installed and is functional.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

6. Prior the commencement of the operation of the authorized windfarm, the developer shall inform the planning authority of the name and address of the person who shall occupy the site as its operator and who shall be responsible for the subsequent decommissioning of the windfarm and compliance with the various other conditions set out hereunder. The operator shall inform the planning authority if there is any change in these details and provide the name and address of any new operator at least three months before the latter person assumes responsibility for the windfarm. There shall only be a single operator of the entire authorised windfarm at any one time.

Reason: To facilitate the enforcement of the various conditions of this permission that pertains to the operation and decommissioning of the authorised development.

7. The site shall be landscaped and the visual impacts screened in accordance with a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

8. Prior to the commencement of development the developer shall submit for the written agreement of the planning authority a plan for the decommissioning of the authorised windfarm and the reinstatement of the site which shall provide for the removal of the turbines, towers, meteorological monitoring masts and all plant and equipment and the reinstatement of the turbine bases and hard standing areas, as well as a time frame for the completion of such works which shall not be greater than 12 months from the cessation of the operation of the windfarm.

Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or such other security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site upon cessation of the project coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to such reinstatement. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site and to prevent an accumulation of obsolete functional structures in the interests of orderly development.

9. The construction of the proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with a Construction and Environment Management Plan prepared having regard to CIRIA Guidelines C848 which shall set out a construction method statement and timetable for all works and measures that are integral to the proposed development. The plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to the commencement of development. The Construction and Environment Management Plan shall include a comprehensive Construction-Stage Drainage Report and Management Plan with -
- (a) Details of the proposed water monitoring protocol and drainage inspection regime.
 - (b) Full details of measures for the control of drainage during and after construction (including tree-felling prior to construction), including the use of settlement ponds, swales and silt traps, and measures for the control of run-off from temporary spoil storage areas.
 - (c) Details of the nature of all materials used in constructing access tracks to the turbines.
 - (d) Full details of storage proposals for hazardous materials, cement leachate, hydrocarbons and other materials to be used during construction.
 - (e) Details of all aspects of the management of excess spoil, such that slope stability measures and prevention of water pollution are fully implemented. Soil, rock, peat and sand/gravel excavated during construction shall not be left stockpiled on site following completion of works.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and orderly development.

10. Prior to the commencement of development, the following details shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:-

- (i) a Transport Management Plan, including details of the road network/haulage routes and the vehicle types to be used to transport materials and parts on and off site,
- (ii) a condition survey of the roads and bridges along the haul routes to be carried out at the developer's expense by a qualified engineer both before and after construction of the windfarm development. This survey shall include a schedule of required works to enable the haul routes and, in particular, regional and local roads in to cater for construction-related traffic. The extent and scope of the survey and the schedule of works shall be agreed with the planning authority prior to commencement of development,
- (iii) detailed arrangements whereby the rectification of any construction damage which arises shall be completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority,
- (iv) detailed arrangements for temporary traffic arrangements/controls on roads, and
- (v) a programme indicating the timescale within which it is intended to use each public route to facilitate construction of the development.

All works arising from the aforementioned arrangements shall be completed at the developer's expense, within 12 months of the cessation of each road's use as a haul route for the proposed development.

Reason: To protect the public road network and to clarify the extent of the permission in the interest of traffic safety and orderly development.

11. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority, a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or such other security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12. The construction of the development shall not give rise to emissions of dust that exceed 350 milligrams per square metre per day, or emissions of noise that result in recorded levels at the facades of houses above 65dB(A)LAeq 1hour. The hours of work shall be restricted to between 0700 and 1900 Monday to Saturday and not at all on Sundays or public holidays, unless the prior written agreement of the planning authority has been obtained. Prior to the commencement of construction activities, the developer shall agree, in writing, with the planning authority a plan to control such emissions for the duration of the construction works. The plan shall include details of the method and locations dust monitoring, measures to be implemented to reduce emissions and actions to be taken in the event of complaints.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and orderly development.

13. The developer shall facilitate the preservation, recording and protection of archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site. In this regard, the developer shall:
- (a) notify the planning authority in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of any site operation (including hydrological and geotechnical investigations) relating to the proposed development,
 - (b) employ a suitably-qualified archaeologist who shall monitor all site investigations and other excavation works, and prepare a report on the results of such monitoring to be submitted to the planning authority and to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,

- (c) provide arrangements, acceptable to the planning authority, for the recording and removal of any archaeological material which the authority considers appropriate to remove. In particular, archaeological excavation shall be carried out at Areas of Archaeological Potential identified in the Environmental Impact Statement submitted.

A comprehensive report on the completed archaeological excavation shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority and to the National Monuments Service within a period of six months or within such extended period as may be agreed with the planning authority.

Reason: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site, it is considered reasonable that the developer should facilitate the preservation and protection or the preservation by record of any archaeological features or materials which may exist within it.

- 14. Cables within the site shall be laid underground. The wind turbines shall be geared to ensure that the blades rotate in the same direction. The colour and finishes of the turbines shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

- 15. Prior to commencement of development, details of aeronautical requirements shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority. Subsequently, the developer shall inform the planning authority and the Irish Aviation Authority of the coordinates of the 'as constructed' turbines and the highest point of the turbines.

Reason: In the interest of air traffic safety.

- 16. In the event that the proposed development causes interference with telecommunications signals in the area, effective measures shall be implemented to minimise such interference. Details of these measures, which shall be at the developer's expense, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commissioning of the turbines, and following consultation with the relevant authorities.

Reason: In the interest of orderly planning and residential amenity.

17. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to the commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

**Member of An Bord Pleanála
duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.**

Dated this day of 2016.